

Message Text

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70

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ACDA-05 /064 W

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R 131700Z JUN 75

FM USMISSION USBERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1050

AMEMBASSY BONN

INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN UNN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

CINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

CINCUSAREUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L USBERLIN 1152

CINCUER FOR POLAD AND OPS

CINCUSAFE FOR POLAD AND OPS AND INCO

CINCUSAREUR FOR POLAD, OPS, AEAGC-COC & AEAAG-AP

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, WB, GE, UR

SUBJECT: NEW BARRIERS AT MARIENBORN CHECKPOINT

REF: USBERLIN A-205 (OCTOBER 21, 1974)

1. SUMMARY: ALLIED BERLIN MISSIONS HAVE EXPRESSED TO SOVIETS AT BOTH CHECKPOINT AND EMBASSY LEVEL CONCERN AT CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BARRIERS AT SOVIET-GDR MARIENBORN CHECKPOINT. WHILE RESPONSE AT CHECKPOINT LEVEL WAS UNSATISFACTORY, EMBASSY HAS ASSURED US THAT SOVIETS HAVE NO INTENTION TO ABDICATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALLIED ACCESS OR TO TURN OVER TO EAST GERMANS ANY FACET
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OF CONTROL OR PROCESSING OF ALLIED TRAFFIC. BRITISH AND

FRENCH MISSIONS ARE ANXIOUS TO OBTAIN MORE EXPLICIT ASSURANCES REGARDING PURPOSE AND OPERATION OF NEW BARRIERS AND, WHILE NOT SANGUINE AS TO OUTCOME, WE HAVE CONCURRED IN FURTHER APPROACH TO SOVIETS ALONG THESE LINES. END SUMMARY:

2. EAST GERMANS INITIATED CONSTRUCTION IN MID-APRIL ON TWO NEW SETS OF VEHICULAR BARRIERS IN MARIENBORN CHECKPOINT COMPLEX AT WESTERN END OF BERLIN-HELMSTEDT AUTOBAHN. (REFAIR DESCRIBED 1974 CONSTRUCTION OF MODERNIZED MARIENBORN FACILITIES AND INITIAL ALLIED DIFFICULTIES WITH EXTRA VERTICALLY RAISED WOODEN POLE BARRIERS INCORPORATED INTO NEW DESIGN AT TIME.) NEW HORIZONTAL SWING BARRIERS (GATE TYPE) HAVE ALREADY BEEN EMPLACED IN BOTH LANES WITHIN SOVIET CHECKPOINT AREA (WHERE ONLY ALLIED TRAFFIC PROCESSED), AND SIMILAR OBSTACLES ARE NOW NEARING COMPLETION IN BOTH LANES OF HIGHWAY APPROXIMATELY 500 METERS TO WEST, WHERE BOTH ALLIED AND REGULAR CIVILIAN TRAFFIC COULD BE AFFECTED. IN OBSTRUCTIVE POWER, NEW GATE BARRIERS SEEM TO LIE MIDWAY BETWEEN ORDINARY WOODEN POLE AND PRESSURE BARRIER. PRESUMABLY THEY ARE INTENDED AS ADDITIONAL ANTI-ESCAPE DEVICES, ALTHOUGH THIS JUSTIFICATION APPEARS SLIM IN CASE OF BARRIERS INSIDE SOVIET CHECKPOINT AREA. TO DATE, THOSE BARRIERS ALREADY COMPLETED HAVE REMAINED IN OPEN POSITION.

3. ON APRIL 24 BRITISH AND US HELMSTEDT COMMANDERS QUESTIONED SOVIET MARIENBORN COMMANDANT, LT. COL. PODDUBSKI, AS TO PURPOSE OF CONSTRUCTION THEN GETTING UNDERWAY. WITHOUT BEING SPECIFIC, PODDUBSKI SAID THAT BARRIERS WERE BEING ERECTED TO ENSURE SAFE FLOW OF TRAFFIC. HE DID NOT KNOW WHO WOULD OPERATE BARRIER IN SOVIET CHECKPOINT AREA, BUT GAVE AS PERSONAL OPINION THAT IT WOULD BE SOVIET SENTRY. PODDUBSKI ADDED THAT CONSTRUCTION WAS TAKING PLACE ON GDR SOVEREIGN TERRITORY, AND THAT SOVIETS DID NOT HAVE RIGHT TO INTERVENE IN GDR INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

4. ON APRIL 30 SECOND APPROACH WAS MADE TO PODDUBSKI BY BRITISH HELMSTEDT COMMANDER, ACTING ON BEHALF OF US AND FRENCH ALSO. RECALLING STATEMENT MADE AT CHECKPOINT LEVEL
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OCTOBER 4, 1974 CONCERNING NEW MARIENBORN FACILITIES (REFAIR, P. 4), BRITISH COMMANDER SAID THAT ALLIES DID NOT REGARD NEW CONSTRUCTION AS CHANGING IN ANY WAY ALLIED RIGHT OF ACCESS TO BERLIN OR EXCLUSIVE SOVIET RESPONSIBILITY FOR FREE AND UNHINDERED EXERCISE OF THIS RIGHT BY ALLIED TRAFFIC. PODDUBSKI RESPONDED THAT NO DELAYS HAD BEEN CAUSED IN ALLIED TRAFFIC, AND THAT HE COULD NOT THEREFORE UNDERSTAND REASON FOR STATEMENT. HE ACKNOWLEDGED SOVIET RESPONSIBILITY FOR

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70+T,0#<,MZK."26*0H|D/-T*PKNETU6 +R2?QW#T<YC*0\$>5>DX
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1;PQ9A<40BY4,G96)';6_W'L

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